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GLIDER RESEARCH IN TATRY MOUNTAINS, POLAND, MARCH 1951

The Main Administration of the Aviation League has organized an experimental glider expedition to investigate the origin of air currents in the Tatra Mountains and to determine whether or not these currents can be used for high-altitude glider flights. The expedition has been in operation for a couple of weeks and will continue experimental flights till the end of March, making use of the winter-spring mountain winds at this time of the year, just as the camp at Jezow held flights under fall and winter conditions in the mountains.

Although this year's late winter favored the project at Jezow, it will hamper experimental work in the Tatra Mountains. These high mountains jealously guard the secret of their wind currents with unfavorable weather conditions. Ever-present mists and low clouds cover the mountains from base to peak, and the violent Tatra snowstorms render impossible the initiation of experimental flights within the limits permitted by the expedition's preparations.

Preparations for the expedition are extensive. As a result of the Jezow experience, the new expedition is prepared for any eventuality. The aircraft are fully equipped for winter flights, all gliders have oxygen equipment, and the members of the expedition are young, first-class pilots, familiar with mountain wind conditions, who made splendid high-altitude records at Jezow. Urbanowicz, director of the expedition, is the experienced instructor who managed the fall flights with such success.

A valuable innovation is the participation of meteorologists in the expedition. At the request of the Aviation League, the Panstwowy Instytut Hydrologiczno Meteorologiczny (State Hydrological and Meteorological Institute), which broadcasts the official "met-szyb" daily weather forecast for pilots in code each evening, has organized a well-equipped weather station for the expedition at Nowy Targ. The director of this group of meteorologists is Kucharski. The preliminary work of organization was done by Parczewski, known to readers of Skrzydla i Motor for his articles on glider meteorology and for his participation with Pilot Brzusik in the record high-altitude flight in a two-seat glider.

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The meteorologists have installed a fully equipped field station, and their laboratory includes psychometers, theodolites, anemometers, thermographs, barographs, aneroid barometers, telemeters, and many other useful instruments whose readings and measurements will give a composite picture of the local meteorological situation. The pilots are especially interested in the meteorograph fastened to the strut of the aircraft, which measures and records the temperature and humidity in a given region at a given altitude.

Despite unfavorable weather at the moment, the work of the expedition is in full swing. The meteorologists are in constant contact by telephone with the meteorological observatory at Kasprowy Wierch (Kasprowy Peak) and with the synoptic bureau in Krakow. They also make hourly observations and measurements on the spot, collecting material for subsequent analysis. This analysis will provide a theoretical foundation for the practical experience of the glider pilot.

The pilots utilize every favorable opportunity to familiarize themselves with the snow-covered landing fields and with the terrain of future experimental flights. Test flights have been made to determine the precise altitude which permits a glider in free flight to travel from particular areas to the airfield. A series of training flights have also been made to teach both glider and tow pilots how to make perfect landings in the snow. Since the field is an unrelieved mass of white, much practice is needed for judging distance when coming in for a landing.

Despite the work to be done, the expedition members find time for community work. The Training Chapter of the Aviation League organized a course in glider theory at the local Agricultural Lyceum. Adamek, Derkowski, and Przyjemski served as instructors, with the result that at the end of the course several score of students will be ready for practical glider training.

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